Christians in rural region of Gujarat

4080. SHRI PRAVEEN RASHTRAPAL: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the helpless, very few Christians in the rural region of Gujarat tribal belt, would be protected from fundamentalist organizations;

(b) whether Government is aware of the recent attack on a Christian minority N.G.O., doing socio-educational work, on the 19th December, 2007 in village Baidiya, Quant near Vadodara;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether Government would ask the National Commission for Minorities to prepare a special report regarding atrocities on Christian minority community in the tribal belt of Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) to (d) On 19/12/2007, when a group of Christian priests and students of Don Bosco School, Kawant, went to village Baidiya to enact a play as part of a people awareness programme, they were prevented from doing so and later attacked while they were returning to Kawant. The National Commission for Minorities took notice of the news items that reported the incident and sought a report from the Government of Gujarat which conveyed that an FIR was registered at Kawant Police Station (district Vododara), the accused arrested and investigation started.

Practice of Yoga in Kashmir

†4081. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS:
SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the reports in print media that Muslims are also practicing yoga in Kashmir;

(b) whether practitoners are claiming that yoga is proving helpful in bringing back the good sense in those people; who were following the path of violence; and

(c) whether advice/guidelines regarding the practice of yoga in minority educational institutions would be issued?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) Government of Jammu & Kashmir has intimated that they are not aware of such reports.

(c) There is no such proposal.

Setting up of National Minority Development Corporation

†4082. SHRI MOTILAL VORA:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government is considering to set up the National Minority Development Corporation;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the main objectives and mode of functioning of the Corporation?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) No, Sir. This Ministry has already one corporation by the name of National Minorities Development & Finance Corporation.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Sikhs a Non-minority in Punjab

†4083. SHRI PYARELAL KHANDELWAL: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that as per a recent order of High Court, Sikhs do not fall under the category of minority in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether keeping in view the above said decision, Government is considering to amend that Act which states that a few communities have been given the status of minority at national level;

(d) whether Government has received any recommendation from the National Commission for Minorities; and

(e) if so, the details thereof, alongwith the action taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI A.R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) The Constitution (One Hundred and Third Amendment) Bill to confer constitutional status on the National Commission for Minorities and the National Commission for Minorities (Repeal) Bill, 2004 were introduced in the Lok Sabha in December, 2004. The Bills were referred to the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment for examination. The recommendations of the Standing Committee on Social Justice and Empowerment regarding the Bills have been received. These, alongwith related issues, are being examined.

(d) and (e) The National Commission for Minorities, in its Sixth Annual Report for 1998-1999, had made some recommendations regarding determination of minorities. The Report, alongwith Action Taken Memorandum thereon, was tabled in the Rajya Sabha on 14th May, 2007.

Maulana Azad Education Foundation Funds

4084. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of MINORITY AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the funds available with the Maulana Azad Education Foundation during 2007-08 for disbursal, could not be utilized fully;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the cases pending at present; and

(d) by when all the cases are likely to be cleared?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.